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SPEECH

OF

WENDELL PHILLIPS, ESQ.

IN

VINDICATION OF THE COURSE PURSUED

BY THE

AMERICAN ABOLITIONISTS;

DELIVERED IN BOSTON ON THURSDAY, JANUARY 27, 1853, AT THE TWENTY-FIRST
ANNUAL MEETING OF THE MASSACHUSETTS ANTI-SLAVERY SOCIETY.

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Illustrative Notes.

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MR. WENDELL PHILLIPS belongs to one of the oldest and most respectable families in Massachusetts. He was educated for the bar. He has been sixteen or seventeen years in the anti-slavery ranks. He is of "orthodox" religious opinions. His anti-slavery fidelity has lost him everything but the approval of his conscience, the love of the true friends of the slave, and the admiration which his unrivalled eloquence extorts from foes as well as friends. His abilities, which are transcendent, do not exceed his moral courage, which has calmly faced the most threatening dangers and the most unrelenting opposition. In addition to his labours, which are unceasing and wholly gratuitous, he gives largely of his substance to support the various agencies of the American anti-slavery cause, and is ever engaged in works of benevolence and mercy, seeking to conceal his acts even from the knowledge of his most confidential friends. As a speaker, he has no equal in the United States. Theodore Parker, a few weeks since, when speaking of Edward Everett, some time since American minister in England, said :—"He (Everett) has an eloquence—it is surpassed only by one voice,"—pointing at the same time to Wendell Phillips. Mr. Parker spoke within the truth. Everett, with all his scholarship, is greatly surpassed by Phillips. A collection of his speeches in a volume would be worthy of the perusal and criticism of the first among the critics and reviewers of England.

The following speech is in no wise remarkable as the production of Mr. Phillips. It contains fewer rhetorical beauties than are usually found in his addresses. It seems to have been his study to restrain his fancy, and subdue his style to the proper level of narrative and sober argument. This speech is, however, a clear and able defence of the Abolitionists, in reply to the current charges against them, and is peculiarly suited for circulation on this side of the Atlantic. It is a Manual of Anti-slavery fact and argument, of ready reference, for the use of the friends of the Slave, when met by the sophistries of slaveholders and their abettors.

March 23, 1853.

SPEECH OF WENDELL PHILLIPS, ESQ.

WENDELL PHILLIPS came forward, and presented, from the Business Committee,* the following resolution:—

Resolved, That the object of this Society is now, as it has always been, to convince our countrymen, by arguments addressed to their hearts and consciences, that slaveholding is a heinous crime, and that the duty, safety and interest of all concerned, demand its immediate abolition, without expatriation.

I wish, Mr. President, to notice some objections that have been made to our course ever since Mr. Garrison began his career, and some of which have been lately urged again, with considerable force and emphasis, in the columns of the *London Leader*, the able organ of a respectable and influential class in England. I hope, Sir, you will not think it waste of time to bring such a subject before you. I know these objections have been made a thousand times; that they have been often answered; though we have generally submitted to them in silence, willing to let results speak for us. But there are times when justice to the slave will not allow us to be silent. There are many in this country, many in England, who have had their attention turned recently to the anti-slavery cause. They are asking, "Which is the best and most efficient method of helping it?" Engaged ourselves in an effort for the slave which time has tested and success hitherto approved, we are very properly desirous that they should join us in our labours, and pour into this channel the full tide of their new zeal and great resources. Thoroughly convinced ourselves that our course is wise, we can honestly urge others to adopt it. Long experience gives us a right to advise. The fact that our course, more than all other efforts, has caused that agitation which has awakened these new converts, gives us a right to counsel them. They are our spiritual children: for their sakes we would free the cause we love and trust from every seeming defect and plausible objection. For the slave's sake, we reiterate our explanations, that he may lose no tittle of help by the mistakes or mis-conceptions of his friends.

All that I have to say on these points will be to you, Mr. President, very trite and familiar; but the facts may be new to some, and I prefer to state them here, in Boston, where we have lived and worked, because, if our statements are incorrect, if we claim too much, our assertions can be easily answered and disproved.

Summary of the charges against the Abolitionists.

The charges to which I refer are these: That, in dealing with slaveholders and their apologists, we indulge in fierce denunciations instead

* At the stated meetings of the Abolitionists, a business committee is appointed at the first sitting, to which is entrusted the preparation of the resolutions to be brought forward and discussed in open meeting. The utmost freedom of debate prevails on those occasions, and the defenders of slavery are free to state their views.

of appealing to their reason and common sense by plain statements and fair argument;—that we might have won the sympathies and support of the nation if we had submitted to argue this question with a manly patience; but that, instead of this, we have outraged the feelings of the community by attacks, unjust and unnecessarily severe, on its most valued institutions, and gratified our spleen by indiscriminate abuse of leading men, who were often honest in their intentions, however mistaken in their views;—that we have utterly neglected the ample means that lay around us to convert the nation, submitted to no discipline, formed no plan, been guided by no foresight, but hurried on in childish, reckless, blind and hot-headed zeal—bigots in the narrowness of our views, and fanatics in our blind fury of invective, and malignant judgment of other men's motives.

There are some who come upon our platform, and give us the aid of names and reputations less burdened than ours with popular odium, who are perpetually urging us to exercise charity in our judgments of those about us, and to consent to argue these questions. These men are ever parading their wish to draw a line between themselves and us, because *they must be permitted* to wait—to trust more to reason than feeling—to indulge a generous charity—to rely on the sure influence of simple truth uttered in love, &c. &c. I reject with scorn all these implications that *our* judgments are uncharitable,—that *we* are lacking in patience,—that *we* have any other dependence than on the simple truth, spoken with Christian frankness yet with Christian love. These lectures, to which you, Sir, and all of us have so often listened, would be impertinent if they were not rather ridiculous for the gross ignorance they betray of the community, of the cause, and of the whole course of its friends.

Criticisms on their proceedings, by ION, in the London Leader.

The article in the *Leader* to which I refer is signed ION, and may be found in the *Liberator* of December 17th, 1852. The writer is cordial and generous in his recognition of Mr. Garrison's claim to be the representative of the anti-slavery movement, and does entire justice to his motives and character. The criticisms of ION were reprinted in the *Christian Register* of this city, the organ of the Unitarian denomination. The editors of that paper, with their usual Christian courtesy, love of truth, and fair-dealing, omitted all ION's expressions of regard for Mr. Garrison and appreciation of his motives, and reprinted only those parts of the article which undervalue his sagacity and influence, and endorse the common objections to his methods and views. You will see in a moment, Mr. President, that it is with such men and presses ION thinks Mr. Garrison has not been sufficiently wise and patient in winning them to help the anti-slavery cause. Perhaps, were he on the spot, it would tire even his patience, and puzzle even his sagacity to make any other use of them than that of the drunken Helot—a warning to others how disgustingly mean vice is. Perhaps, were he here, he would see that the best and only use to be made of them is to let them unfold their own characters, and then show the world how rotten our politics and religion are, that they bear naturally such fruit. ION quotes Mr. Garrison's original declaration in the *Liberator*:—

"I am aware that many object to the severity of my language; but is there not cause for severity? I *will* be as harsh as truth, and as uncompromising as justice. I am in earnest—I will not equivocate—I will not excuse—I will not retreat a single inch—AND I WILL BE HEARD.

"It is *pretended* that I am retarding the cause of emancipation by the coarseness of my invective, and the precipitancy of my measures. *The charge is not true.* On this question, my influence, humble as it is, is felt at this moment to a considerable extent, and shall be felt in coming years—not perniciously, but beneficially—not as a curse, but as a blessing; and posterity will bear testimony that I was right. I desire to thank God that he enables me 'to disregard the fear of man which bringeth a snare,' and to speak his truth in its simplicity and power."

He then goes on to say:—

"This is a defence which has been generally accepted on this side of the Atlantic, and many are the abolitionists among us whom it has encouraged in honesty and impotence; and whom it has converted into conscientious hindrances. * * *

"We would have Mr. Garrison to say, 'I will be as harsh as *progress*, as uncompromising as *success*.' If a man speaks for his own gratification, he may be as 'harsh' as he pleases; but if he speaks for the downtrodden and oppressed, he must be content to put a curb upon the tongue of holiest passion, and speak only as harshly as is compatible with the amelioration of the evil he proposes to redress. Let the question be again repeated: Do you seek for the slave vengeance or redress? If you seek retaliation, go on denouncing. But distant Europe honours Wm. Lloyd Garrison, because it credits him with seeking for the slave simply redress. We say, therefore, that 'uncompromising' policy is not to be measured by absolute justice, but by practical amelioration of the slave's condition. Amelioration as fast as you can get it—absolute justice as soon as you can reach it."

He quotes the sentiment of Confucius, that he would choose for a leader "a man who would maintain a steady vigilance in the direction of affairs; who was capable of forming plans, and of executing them," and says:—

"The philosopher was right in placing wisdom and executive capacity above courage; for down to this day our popular movements are led by heroes who *fear* nothing and who *win* nothing.

"There is no question raised in these articles as to the work to be done, but only as to the mode of *really* doing it. The platform resounds with announcements of principle, which is but *asserting* a right, while nothing but contempt is showered on the policy which is the *realization* of right. The air is filled with all high cries and spirited denunciations; indignation is at a premium; and this is called advocacy. * * * But to calculate, to make sure of your aim, is to be decried as one who is too cold to feel, too genteel to strike."

Further on, he observes:—

"If an artillery officer throws shell after shell which never reaches the enemy, he is replaced by some one with a better eye and surer aim. But in the artillery battle of opinion, *to mean* to hit is quite sufficient; and if you have a certain grand indifference as to whether you hit or not, you may count on public applause.

"A man need be no less militant as the soldier of facts than as the agent of swords. But the arena of argument needs discipline not less than that of arms. It is this which the anti-slavery party seem to me not only to overlook, but to despise. They do not put their valour to drill. Neither on the field nor the platform has courage any inherent capacity of taking care of itself."

The writer then proceeds to make a quotation from Mr. Emerson, the latter part of which I will read:—

"Let us withhold every *reproachful*, and, if we can, every *indignant* remark. In this cause, we must renounce our temper and the risings of pride. If there be any man who thinks the ruin of a race of men a small matter compared with the last decorations and completions of his own comfort—who could not so much as part with his ice-cream to save them from rapine and manacles—I think I must not hesitate to satisfy *that* man, that also his ice-cream and vanilla are safer and cheaper by placing the negro nation on a fair footing than by robbing them. If the Virginian piques himself on the picturesque luxury of his vassalage, on the heavy Ethiopian manners of his house servants, their silent obedience, their hue of bronze, their turbaned heads, and would not exchange them for the more intelligent but precarious hired service of whites, I shall not refuse to show to *him* that when their free papers are made out, it will still be their interest to remain on his estates; and that the oldest planters of Jamaica are convinced that it is cheaper to pay wages than to own slaves."

The critic takes exception to Mr. Garrison's approval of the denunciatory language in which Daniel O'Connell rebuked the giant sin of America, and concludes his articles with this sentence:—

"When Wm. Lloyd Garrison praises the great Celtic monarch of invective for this dire outpouring, he acts the part of the boy who fancies that the terror is in the war-whoop of the savage, unmindful of the quieter muskets of the civilized infantry, whose unostentatious execution blows whoop and tomahawk to the devil."

Before passing to a consideration of these remarks of Ion, let me say a word in relation to Mr. Emerson. I do not consider him as endorsing any of these criticisms on the abolitionists. His services to the most radical anti-slavery movement have been generous and marked. He has never shrunk from any odium which lending his name and voice to it would incur. Making fair allowance for his peculiar taste, habits and genius, he has given a generous amount of aid to the anti-slavery movement, and never let its friends want his cordial "God-speed."

Ion's charges are the old ones, that we abolitionists are hurting our own cause—that, instead of waiting for the community to come up to our views, and endeavouring to remove prejudice and enlighten ignorance by patient explanation and fair argument, we fall at once, like children, to abusing everything and everybody; that we imagine zeal will supply the place of common sense; that we have never shown any sagacity in adapting our means to our ends; have never studied the national character, or attempted to make use of the materials which lay all about us, to influence public opinion; but, by blind, childish, obstinate fury and indiscriminate denunciation, have become "honestly impotent and conscientious hindrances."

The same charges have been made against all reformers in all ages.

These, Sir, are the charges which have uniformly been brought against all reformers in all ages. Ion thinks the same faults are chargeable on the leaders of all the "popular movements" in England, which, he says, "are led by heroes who *fear* nothing and who *win* nothing." If the leaders of popular movements in Great Britain for the last fifty years have been *losers*, I should be curious to know what party, in Ion's opinion, has won? My Lord Derby and his friends seem to think democracy has made and is making dangerous headway. If the men who, by popular agitation outside of Parliament, wrung from a

powerful oligarchy Parliamentary Reform, and the Abolition of the Test Acts, of high Post Rates, of Catholic Disability, of Negro Slavery and the Corn Laws, did "not win anything," it would be hard to say what winning is. If the men who, without the ballot, made Peel their tool and conquered the Duke of Wellington, are considered unsuccessful, pray what kind of a thing would success be? Those who now, at the head of that same middle class, demand the separation of church and state, and the extension of the Ballot, may well guess, from the fluttering of the Whig and Tory doves, that soon they will "win" that same "nothing." Heaven grant they may enjoy the same *ill success* as their predecessors! On our own side of the ocean, too, we ought deeply to sympathise with the leaders of the temperance movement in their entire want of success! If Ion's mistakes about the anti-slavery cause lay as much on the surface as those I have just noticed, it would be hardly worth while to reply to him; for as to these, he certainly exhibits only "the extent and variety of his mis-information."

Ion's remarks upon the anti-slavery movement are inaccurate.

His remarks upon the anti-slavery movement are, however, equally inaccurate. I claim, before you who know the true state of the case, I claim for the anti-slavery movement with which this Society is identified, that, looking back over its whole course, and considering the men connected with it in the mass, it has been marked by the soundest judgment, the most unerring foresight, the most sagacious adaptation of means to ends, the strictest self-discipline, the most thorough research, and an amount of patient and manly argument addressed to the conscience and intellect of the nation, such as no other cause of the kind, in England or this country, has ever offered. I claim, also, that its course has been marked by a cheerful surrender of all individual claims to merit or leadership—the most cordial welcoming of the slightest effort, of every honest attempt to lighten or to break the chain of the slave. I need not waste time by repeating the superfluous confession that we are men, and therefore do not claim to be perfect. Neither would I be understood as denying that we use denunciation, and ridicule, and every other weapon that the human mind knows. We must plead guilty, if guilty it be, not to be able to separate the sin from the sinner. With all the fondness for abstractions attributed to us, we are not yet capable of that. We are fighting a momentous battle at desperate odds—one against a thousand. Every weapon that ability or ignorance, wit, wealth, prejudice, or fashion can command, is pointed against us. The guns are shotted to their lips. The arrows are poisoned. We cannot afford to confine ourselves to any one weapon. The cause is not ours, so that we might rightfully postpone or put in peril the victory by moderating our demands, stifling our convictions, or filing down our rebukes, to gratify any sickly taste of our own, or to spare the delicate nerves of our neighbour. Our clients are three millions of slaves, standing dumb suppliants at the threshold of the Christian world. They have no voice but ours to utter their complaints or demand justice. The press, the pulpit, the wealth, the literature, the prejudices, the political arrangements, the present self-interest of the country, are all against

us. God has given us no weapon but the truth, faithfully uttered, and addressed, with the old prophet's directness, to the conscience of the individual sinner. The elements which control public opinion and mould the masses are against us. We can but pick off here and there a man from the triumphant majority. We have facts for those who think—arguments for those who reason; but he who cannot be reasoned out of his prejudices must be laughed out of them; he who cannot be argued out of his selfishness must be shamed out of it by the mirror of his hateful self held up relentlessly before his eyes. We live in a land where every man makes broad his phylactery, inscribing thereon, "All men are created equal"—"God hath created of one blood all the nations of men." It seems to us that in such a land there must be, on this question of slavery, sluggards to be awakened as well as doubters to be convinced. Many more, we verily believe, of the first than of the last. There are far more dead hearts to be quickened than confused intellects to be cleared up—more dumb dogs to be made to speak, than doubting consciences to be enlightened. (Loud cheers.) We have use then, sometimes, for something besides argument.

What is the denunciation with which the Abolitionists are charged?

What is the denunciation with which we are charged? It is endeavouring, in our faltering human speech, to declare the enormity of the sin of making merchandise of men—of separating husband and wife—taking the infant from its mother, and selling the daughter to prostitution—of a professedly Christian nation denying by statute the bible to every sixth man and woman of its population, and making it illegal for "two or three" to meet together, except a white man be present! What is this harsh criticism of motives with which we are charged? It is simply holding the intelligent and deliberate actor responsible for the character and consequences of his acts. Is there anything inherently wrong in such denunciation or such criticism? This we may claim—we have never judged a man but out of his own mouth. We have seldom, if ever, held him to account except for acts of which he and his own friends were proud. All that we ask the world and thoughtful men to note, are the principles and deeds on which the American pulpit and American public men plume themselves. We always allow our opponents to paint their own pictures. Our humble duty is to stand by and assure the spectators, that what they would take for a knave or a hypocrite is really, in American estimation, a Doctor of Divinity or a Secretary of State.

The South is one great brothel, where half a million of women are flogged to prostitution, or, worse still, are degraded to believe it honourable. The public squares of half our great cities echo to the wail of families torn asunder at the auction block. No one of our fair rivers that has not closed over the negro seeking in death a refuge from a life too wretched to bear. Thousands of fugitives skulk along our highways, afraid to tell their names, and trembling at the sight of a human being. Freemen are kidnapped in our streets, to be plunged into the hell of slavery; and now and then one, as if by miracle, after long years, returns to make men aghast with his tale. The press says, "It is all right;" and the pulpit cries, "Amen!" We print the bible in

every tongue in which man utters his prayers—and get the money to do so, by agreeing never to give the book, in the language our mother taught us, to any negro, free or bond, south of Mason and Dixon's line.* The press says, "It is all right;" and the pulpit cries "Amen!" The slave lifts up his imploring eyes, and sees in every face but ours the face of an enemy. Prove to me now that harsh rebuke, indignant denunciation, scathing sarcasm, and pitiless ridicule are wholly and always unjustifiable; else we dare not, in so desperate a case, throw away any weapon which ever broke up the crust of an ignorant prejudice, roused a slumbering conscience, shamed a proud sinner, or changed in any way the conduct of a human being. Our aim is to alter public opinion. Did we live in a market, our talk should be of dollars and cents, and we would seek to prove only that slavery was an unprofitable investment. Were the nation one great, pure church, we would sit down and reason of "righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come." Had slavery fortified itself in a college, we would load our cannons with cold facts, and wing our arrows with arguments. But we happen to live in the world—the world made up of thought and impulse, of self-conceit and self-interest, of weak men and wicked. To conquer, we must reach all. Our object is not to make every man a christian or a philosopher, but to induce every one to aid in the abolition of slavery. We expect to accomplish our object long before the nation is made over into saints or elevated into philosophers. To change public opinion, we use the very tools by which it was formed. That is, all such as an honest man may touch.

All this I am not only ready to allow, but I should be ashamed to think of the slave, or to look into the face of my fellow-man, if it were otherwise. It is the only thing that justifies us to our own consciences, and makes us able to say we have done or at least tried to do our duty.

Every important argument or idea broached on the anti-slavery question, since 1830, has proceeded from the Abolitionists.

So far, however you distrust my philosophy, you will not doubt my statements. That we have denounced and rebuked with unsparing fidelity will not be denied. Have we not also addressed ourselves to that other duty of arguing our question thoroughly—of using due discretion and fair sagacity in endeavouring to promote our cause? Yes, we have. Every statement we have made has been doubted. Every principle we have laid down has been denied by overwhelming majorities against us. No one step has ever been gained but by the most laborious research and the most exhausting argument. And no question has ever, since revolutionary days, been so thoroughly investigated or argued here as that of slavery. Of that research and that argument, of the whole of it, the old-fashioned, fanatical, crazy, Garrisonian anti-slavery movement has been the author. From this band of men has proceeded every important argument or idea that

* "Mason and Dixon's Line," so called from the commissioners by whom it was surveyed, is the frontier between the Free State of Pennsylvania at the north, and the Slave States of Virginia, Maryland, and Delaware, to the south. The phrase is commonly used to express the whole boundary between the Free and the Slave States.

has been broached on the anti-slavery question from 1830 to the present time. (Cheers.) I am well aware of the extent of the claim I make. I recognize as fully as any one can the ability of the new laborers—the eloquence and genius with which they have recommended this cause to the nation, and flashed conviction home on the conscience of the community. I do not mean, either, to assert that they have in every instance borrowed from our treasury their facts and arguments. Left to themselves, they would probably have looked up the one and originated the other. As a matter of fact, however, they have generally made use of the materials collected to their hands. But there are some persons about us, (sympathizers, to a great extent, with Ion) who pretend that the anti-slavery movement has been hitherto mere fanaticism, its only weapon angry abuse. They are obliged to assert this, in order to justify their past indifference or hostility. At present, when it suits their purpose to give it some attention, they endeavour to explain the change by alleging that now it has been taken up by men of thoughtful minds, and its claims are urged by fair discussion and able argument. My claim, then, is this: that neither the charity of the most timid of sects, the sagacity of our wisest converts, nor the culture of the ripest scholars, though all have been aided by our twenty years' experience, has yet struck out any new method of reaching the public mind, or originated any new argument or train of thought, or discovered any new fact bearing on the question.

All subsequent opponents of slavery have had to follow the same course for which the Abolitionists have been condemned.

When once brought fully into the struggle, they have found it necessary to adopt the same means, to rely on the same arguments, to hold up the same men and the same measures to public reprobation, with the same bold rebuke and unsparing invective that we have used. All their conciliatory bearing, their pains-taking moderation, their constant and anxious endeavour to draw a broad line between their camp and ours, have been thrown away. Just so far as they have been effective labourers, they have found, as we have, their hands against every man and every man's hand against them. The most experienced of them are ready to acknowledge that our plan has been wise, our course efficient, and that our unpopularity is no fault of ours, but flows necessarily and unavoidably from our position. "I should suspect," said old Fuller, "that his preaching had no salt in it, if no galled horse did wince." Our friends find, after all, that men do not so much hate us, as the truth we utter and the light we bring. They find that the community are not the honest seekers after truth which they fancied, but selfish politicians and sectarian bigots, who shiver, like Alexander's butler, whenever the sun shines on them. Experience has driven these new labourers back to our method. We have no quarrel with them—would not steal one wreath of their laurels. All we claim is, that if they are to be complimented as prudent, moderate, Christian, sagacious, statesmanlike reformers, we deserve the same praise, for they have done nothing that we, in our measures, did not attempt before. (Cheers.)

Or when they have differed from the Abolitionists, they have merely become compromising.

I claim this, that the cause, in its recent aspect, has put on nothing but timidity. It has taken to itself no new weapons of recent years; it has become more compromising—that is all! It has neither become more persuasive, more learned, more Christian, more charitable, nor more effective, than for the twenty years preceding. Mr. Hale, the head of the Free Soil movement, after a career in the Senate that would do honour to any man—after a six years' course which entitles him to the respect and confidence of the anti-slavery public—can put his name, within the last month, to an appeal from the city of Washington, signed by a Houston and a Cass, for a monument to be raised to Henry Clay!*. If that be the test of charity and courtesy, we cannot give it to the world. (Loud cheers.) Some of the leaders of the Free Soil party of Massachusetts, after exhausting the whole capacity of our language to paint the treachery of Daniel Webster to the cause of liberty, and the evil they thought he was able and seeking to do;—after that, could feel in their hearts to parade themselves in the funeral procession got up to do him honour! In this we allow we cannot follow them. The deference which every gentleman owes to the proprieties of social life, the self respect and regard to consistency which are every man's duty, these,—if no deeper feelings, will ever prevent us of giving such proofs of this newly-invented Christian courtesy. We do not *play* politics; anti-slavery is no half-jest with us; it is a terrible earnest, with life or death, more than life or death, on the issue. It is no law-suit, where it matters not to the good feeling of opposing counsel which way the verdict goes, and where advocates can clasp hands after the decision as pleasantly as before. When we look upon such a man as Henry Clay, his long life, his mighty influence cast always into the scale against the slave; of that irresistible fascination with which he moulded every one to his will; when we remember that, his conscience acknowledging the justice of our cause, and his heart open on every other side to the gentlest impulses, he could sacrifice so remorselessly his convictions and the welfare of millions to his low ambition; when we think how the slave trembled at the sound of his voice, and that, from a multitude of breaking hearts, there went up nothing but gratitude to God when it pleased Him to call that great sinner from this world,—we cannot find it in our hearts, we could not shape our lips to ask any man to do him honour. (Great sensation.) No amount of eloquence, no sheen of official position, no loud grief of partizan friends, would ever lead us to ask monuments or walk in fine processions for pirates; and the sectarian zeal or selfish ambition which gives up, deliberately and in full knowledge of the facts, three millions of

* General Houston, senator for Texas, and General Cass, senator for Michigan, are strenuous upholders of the slave system. Henry Clay, a very eminent statesman, orator, and slaveholder, was one of the ablest and most successful promoters of the area of slavery. He enjoyed prodigious popularity as the representative of the Whig or Anti-Free Trade party, which included the majority of the wealthy and commercial classes. This party was thoroughly routed at the last presidential election, a few months subsequent to Mr. Clay's death, which took place in the early part of 1852.

human beings to hopeless ignorance, daily robbery, systematic prostitution and murder, which the law neither can nor undertakes to prevent or avenge, is more monstrous in our eyes, than the love of gold which takes a score of lives with merciful quickness on the high seas. Haynau on the Danube is no more hateful to us than Haynau on the Potomac. Why give mobs to one, and monuments to the other?

If these things be necessary to courtesy, I cannot claim that we are courteous. We seek only to be honest men, and speak the same of the dead as of the living. If the grave that hides their bodies could swallow also the evil they have done and the example they leave, we might enjoy at least the luxury of forgetting them. But the evil that men do lives after them, and example requires tenfold authority when it speaks from the grave. History, also, is to be written. How shall a feeble minority, without weight or influence in the country, with no jury of millions to appeal to—denounced, vilified and condemned,—how shall we make way against the overwhelming weight of some colossal reputation, if we do not turn from the idolatrous present and appeal to the human race; saying to your idols of to-day, "Here we are defeated, but we will write our judgment with the iron pen of a century to come, and it shall never be forgotten, if we can help it, that you were false in your generation to the claims of the slave!" (Loud cheers.)

The leading politicians of the United States are only restrained in their pro-slavery course by dread of the judgment of posterity.

At present, our leading men, strong in the support of large majorities, and counting safely on the prejudices of the community, can afford to despise us. They know they can overawe or cajole the present; their only fear is the judgment of the future. Strange fear, perhaps, considering how short and local their fame! But however little, it is their all. Our only hold upon them is the thought of that bar of posterity before which we are all to stand. Thank God! there is the elder brother of the Saxon race across the water—there is the army of honest men to come! Before that jury we summon you. We are weak here—out-talked, out-voted. You load our names with infamy, and shout us down. But our words bide their time. We warn the living that we have terrible memories, and that their sins are never to be forgotten. We will gibbet the name of every apostate so black and high that his children's children shall blush to hear it. Yet we bear no malice—cherish no resentment. We thank God that the love of fame, "that last infirmity of noble minds," is shared by the ignoble. In our necessity, we seize this weapon in the slave's behalf, and teach caution to the living by meting out relentless justice to the dead. How strange the change death produces in the way a man is talked about here! While leading men live, they avoid as much as possible all mention of slavery, from fear of being thought abolitionists. The moment they are dead, their friends rake up every word they ever contrived to whisper in a corner for liberty, and parade it before the world; growing angry all the while with us, because we insist on explaining these chance expressions by the tenor of a long and base life. While drunk with the temptations of the present hour, men are willing to bow to

any Moloch. When their friends bury them, they feel what bitter mockery, a hundred years hence, any epitaph will be, if it cannot record of one living at this era some service to the slave! These, Mr. Chairman, are the reasons why we take care that 'the memory of the wicked shall rot.'

The Literature of the anti-slavery cause has been supplied by the Abolitionists or drawn from their resources.

I have claimed that the anti-slavery cause has, from the first, been ably and dispassionately argued, every objection candidly examined, and every difficulty or doubt, any where honestly entertained, treated with respect. Let me glance at the literature of the cause, and try not so much in a brief hour to prove this assertion, as to point out the sources from which any one may satisfy himself of its truth.

On the Texas question.

I will begin with certainly the ablest and perhaps the most honest American statesman who has ever touched the slave question. When John Quincy Adams* first broke ground on the Texas question, he confessed his debt to the full and able exposure of the Texas plot prepared by Benjamin Lundy.† Every one acquainted with those years will allow

* John Quincy Adams, son of John Adams, the second President of the United States, filled the Presidential chair from 1825 to 1829, and died at Washington in his 81st year, in 1848, being at the time one of the representatives in Congress from the State of Massachusetts. His acquirements were prodigious, and his industry indefatigable. Owing, in a great degree, to his persevering endeavours, the Twenty-First Rule of Congress, commonly called "Atherton's Gag," was revoked in 1844, after remaining in operation for ten years. By this disgraceful rule, which was enacted in order to discountenance the abolitionists, it was provided that no petition involving the discussion or the existence of the slave system should be received by Congress.

† Benjamin Lundy of Baltimore, State of Maryland, commenced his anti-slavery labours in 1815, at St. Clairsville, Ohio, where he organised an anti-slavery Society, which soon numbered five hundred members. At the conclusion of an address to one of its first meetings, he stated "that he had had the object long in contemplation, and had now taken it up, fully determined never to lay it down while he breathed, or till the end should be attained." He established a paper, under the title of *The Genius of Universal Emancipation*, the publication of which was continued, with some brief intervals, during the remainder of his life. In the course of this undertaking, he had to struggle with many difficulties—penury, want of patronage, bitter enemies, and cold friends; nevertheless, he persevered with unremitting energy, acting as editor, compositor, and printer. He frequently worked at his trade of saddler, to earn a few dollars to procure materials for his paper. He visited almost every State in the Union, lecturing on slavery. Alone, and often on foot, he encountered fatigue, hunger, and exposure to the frosts of winter, the scorching heats of summer, the contagion of pestilence, and the influence of malaria—ever pressing onwards towards the attainment of his great object—the gradual extinction of slavery. He was the means of instituting a large number of societies throughout the Union, many of them in slaveholding districts, and some of them composed in part of slaveholders. None of those societies now exist. He made several journeys into Texas,—then under the Mexican government,—and procured a tract of land in that country for an intended settlement of coloured people; but was prevented from realizing his benevolent plans by the revolt of Texas. He foresaw the scheme of annexing that territory to the United States, and laboured by voice and pen to arouse the people of the States to see the evils likely to result from such a measure. He died in 1839, after twenty-three years of extraordinary efforts for the promotion of emancipation, and for the welfare of the free people of colour. To him the Anti-slavery cause is indebted for enlisting the services of William Lloyd Garrison, by whom the flag of "*Immediate Emancipation*" was first unfurled in the United States.

that the north owes its earliest knowledge and first awakening on that subject to Mr. Lundy, who made long journeys and devoted years to the investigation. His labours have this attestation, that they stirred the zeal and strengthened the hands of such men as Adams.

On the Right of Petition.

Look next at the Right of Petition. Long before any member of Congress had opened his mouth in its defence, the abolition presses and lecturers had examined and defended the limits of this right, with profound historical research and eminent constitutional ability. So thoroughly had the work been done, that all classes of the people had made up their minds about it long before any speaker of eminence had touched it in Congress. The politicians were little aware of this. When Mr. Adams threw himself so gallantly into the breach, it is said he wrote anxiously home to know whether he would be supported in Massachusetts; little aware of the outburst of popular gratitude that the northern breeze was even then bringing him, deep and cordial enough to wipe away the old grudge Massachusetts had borne him so long. Mr. Adams himself was only in favour of receiving the petitions, and advised to refuse their prayer, which was for the abolition of Slavery in the District [of Columbia].* He doubted the power of Congress. His doubts were examined by Mr. William Goodell, in two letters of most able and acute logic, and of masterly ability.† If Mr. Adams still retained his doubts, it is certain, at least, that he never expressed them afterwards. When Mr. Clay paraded the same objections, the whole question of the power of Congress over the district was treated by Mr. Theodore D. Weld,‡ in the fullest manner and with the widest research:

* The District of Columbia, in which the city of Washington is situated, is a tract of land ten miles square, which was ceded to the jurisdiction of the United States by the contiguous Slave States of Maryland and Virginia. When Congress took possession, they found slavery in existence, and it has remained there ever since. Indeed, until lately, Washington was one of the principal Slave-trading marts in the Union. However, by one of the Conference measures passed in 1850 (of which the Fugitive Slave Law was the most remarkable) the slave mart in the District was abolished, and slaves are no longer introduced for sale and transmission to other parts of the country. Slavery, however, remains, and the slaves of the District are bought and sold as before. One of the efforts of the abolitionists, in which they long persevered, was an endeavour to obtain the abolition of slavery there, on the plea that the District being under the uncontrolled jurisdiction of Congress, such a measure would evince that slavery did not exist by desire of the national government, and could not be objected to as an invasion of the rights of the Slave States in their independent capacity.

† Mr. Goodell, now or formerly a congregational minister, was one of the first to countenance and support Mr. Garrison. He is an able and logical, but diffuse writer. One of the most remarkable of his publications is an essay entitled "Come-outerism," in which he advocates the duty of coming out from all churches that admit slaveholders as members, or palliate the sin of slavery. Hence the abolitionists who on this account have left the religious bodies with which they were connected, are called "Come-outers." Mr. Goodell has also written a "History of American Slavery, and of the efforts for its abolition," in which he evinces a decided partiality for a secession which took place from the American Anti-slavery Society, about twelve years ago, on the part of those who preferred the claims of sect or party to the requisitions of the anti-slavery cause. His "History of the Slave Code in Theory and Practice," lately published in America, is recommended by the high authority of Judge Jay.

‡ Mr. Theodore D. Weld, the most distinguished of the students who left Lane Seminary in the assertion of their rights and duties as abolitionists, is the author of an able disquisi-

indeed, leaving nothing to be added. No answer was ever attempted. The best proof of its ability is, that no one since has presumed to doubt the power. Lawyers and statesmen have tacitly settled down into its full acknowledgment.

On the Colonization Society.

The influence of the Colonization Society on the welfare of the colored race was the first question our movement encountered. To the close logic, eloquent appeals, and fully sustained charges of Mr. Garrison's Letters on that subject no answer was ever made. Judge Jay followed with a work full and able, establishing every charge by the most patient investigation of facts.* It is not too much to say of these two volumes, that they left the Colonization Society hopeless at the North. It dares never show its face before the people, and only lingers in some few nooks of sectarian pride, so secluded from the influence of present ideas as to be almost fossil in their character.

On the practical working of Slavery.

The practical working of the slave system, the slave laws, the treatment of slaves, their food, the duration of their lives, their ignorance and moral condition, and the influence of Southern public opinion on their fate, have been spread out in a detail and with a fulness of evidence which no subject has ever before received in this country. Witness the works of Phelps, Rankin, Grimke, the "Anti-Slavery Record," and, above all, that encyclopedia of facts and storehouse of arguments, the "Thousand Witnesses" of Mr. T. D. Weld. Unique in anti-slavery literature is Mrs. Child's "Appeal," one of the ablest of our weapons, and one of the finest efforts of her rare genius.

On the Teachings of the Bible on Slavery.

The *Princeton Review*, I believe, first challenged the abolitionists to an investigation of the teachings of the bible on slavery. That field had been somewhat broken by our English predecessors. But in England the pro-slavery party had been soon shamed out of the attempt to drag the bible into their service; and hence the discussion there had been short and somewhat superficial. The pro-slavery side of the question has here been eagerly sustained by theological reviews and doctors of divinity without number, from the half way and timid faltering of Wayland up to the unblushing and melancholy recklessness of Stuart.† The argument on the other side has come wholly

tion on "The power of Congress over the District of Columbia;" of another, called "The Bible against Slavery;" and also of an unanswerable exposure of the facts connected with the slave system, entitled "American Slavery as it is, on the Testimony of a Thousand Witnesses." This book was published by the American Anti-slavery Society. It is full of appalling details, and is written with remarkable power. For the last twelve years Mr. Weld has withdrawn from all active participation in the anti-slavery cause.

* The venerable Judge Jay, son of John Jay, one of the most eminent American civilians who participated in the struggle for national independence, is the author of a "Review of the Colonization Society," an "Essay on the Mexican War," and many other valuable contributions to anti-slavery literature.

† Shortly before his death, the Rev. Moses Stuart, a celebrated American divine and Biblical scholar, published a pamphlet in laudation of Daniel Webster, and in support of the Fugitive Slave Bill, supporting his views by appeals to the authority of the bible.

from the abolitionists; for neither Dr. Hague nor Dr. Barnes can be said to have added anything to the wide research, critical acumen, and comprehensive views of T. D. Weld, Beriah Green, J. G. Fee, and the old work of Duncan.

On Constitutional questions connected with Slavery.

On the constitutional questions which have at various times arisen,—the citizenship of the colored man, the soundness of the “Prigg” decision, the constitutionality of the old Fugitive Slave Law, the true construction of the slave code,—nothing has been added, either in the way of fact or argument, to the works of Jay, Weld, Alvan Stewart, E. G. Loring, S. E. Sewall, Richard Hildreth, W. I. Bowditch, the masterly essays of the *Emancipator* at New York, and the *Liberator* of Boston, and the various addresses of the Massachusetts and American Societies for the last twenty years. The idea of the anti-slavery character of the Constitution—the opiate with which Free Soil quiets its conscience for voting under a pro-slavery government—I heard first suggested by Mr. Garrison in 1838.* It was elaborately argued in that year in all our anti-slavery gatherings, both here and in New York, and sustained with great ability by Alvan Stewart, and in part by T. D. Weld. If it has either merit or truth, they are due to no legal learning recently added to our ranks, but to some of its old and well-

* All members of Congress, and every one who takes office under the American government, must swear to support the Constitution of the United States. This compact between the otherwise sovereign and independent States of the Union, contains the following amongst its other stipulations:—

1st. That the President, as Commander-in-Chief of the Forces of the Republic, shall suppress all domestic insurrections, including, of course, all armed attempts of slaves to regain their liberty.

2nd. That every five slaves shall be reckoned as three freemen, in estimating the numerical basis of population which entitles a district to send a representative to Congress.

3rd. That slaves escaping from the Slave States shall be restored to their owners on claim being made for their apprehension.

The abolitionists of the American Anti-slavery Society refuse to swear to these provisions; they declare that no consistent opponent to slavery can uphold them, and assert that a *righteous political* union with slaveholders is impossible, as these will of course insist on stipulations for the maintenance of their property in human beings. But there is a very large class of persons in the United States who are sincerely opposed to slavery, but are yet so imbued with the popular opinion that a union between the States is essential to the national greatness and prosperity, that they shrink from such conclusions. Some of them admit the obligations of the Constitution, but are disposed to limit them in every possible way, and to give the slaveholder no more than his pound of flesh—of these are Messrs. Giddings, Hale, Mann, and Sumner. All these gentlemen have delivered masterly speeches on slavery in Congress. But the force of their eloquent arguments and powerful declamations is much diminished by the consideration that the speaker is trammelled by a divided allegiance, and must always remember his oath to support those stipulations by which slavery maintains its constitutional existence. There is a third class, of which Mr. Gerrit Smith is the most eminent, who deny the constitutionality of slavery. They say that the Constitution of the United States, rightly interpreted, is hostile to its existence; and that nothing more is needed to put an end to the support now given to the institution by the national charter, than a hostile decision of the Supreme Court of the United States, as in the instance of Lord Mansfield’s famous decision in the case of the slave Somerset, in which he declared that a slave cannot breathe in England. This opinion is unquestionably held in perfect good faith by some excellent men; but it is opposed to the sentiment, practice, and interpretation of the courts, legislature, and people of the United States.

known pioneers.* This topic has received the fullest investigation from Mr. Lysander Spooner, who has argued it with all his unrivalled ingenuity, laborious research, and close logic. He writes as a lawyer, and has no wish, I believe, to be ranked with any class of anti-slavery men.

On the American Government.

The influence of slavery on our government has received the profoundest philosophical investigation from the pen of Richard Hildreth, in his invaluable essay on "Despotism in America,"—a work which deserves a place by the side of the ablest political disquisitions of any age.†

On the various aspects of the Anti-slavery Cause.

Mrs. Chapman's survey of "Ten Years of Anti-slavery Experience," was the first attempt at a philosophical discussion of the various aspects of the anti-slavery cause, and the problems raised by its struggles with sect and party. You, Mr. Chairman,‡ in the elaborate Reports of the Massachusetts Anti-slavery Society for the last ten years, have followed in the same path, making to American literature a contribution of the highest value, and in a department where you have few rivals and no superior. Whoever shall write the history either of this movement or any other attempted under a republican government, will find no where else so clear an insight and so full an acquaintance with the most difficult part of his subject.

The opponents of Slavery in Congress have adduced no new arguments.

Even the vigorous mind of Rantoul, the ablest man, without doubt, of the Democratic party, and perhaps the ablest politician in New England, added little or nothing to the storehouse of anti-slavery argument. The grasp of his intellect and the fulness of his learning every one will acknowledge. He never trusted himself to speak on any subject till he had dug down to its primal granite. He laid a most generous contribution on the altar of the anti-slavery cause. His speeches on our question, too short and too few, are remarkable for their compact statement, iron logic, bold denunciations, and the wonderful light thrown back upon our history. Yet how little do they present which was not familiar for years in our anti-slavery meetings.

* Mr. Phillips has omitted to mention the following essays, which we believe were contributed by himself in elucidation of this branch of the Anti-slavery question:—"The Constitution a Pro-slavery Compact," New York, 1844; "Can Abolitionists Vote or take Office under the United States Constitution?" New York, 1845; "Disunion—an Address to the American Anti-slavery Society," New York, 1845.

† Richard Hildreth, of Boston, author of "The White Slave," a "History of the United States," and "Despotism in America." The last is a powerful essay on the slave system, and on its influence in distorting and perverting the views of the public men and the course of politics in the United States.

‡ Edmund Quincy, Esq. This gentleman belongs to one of the best families in the United States; he is an elegant scholar, and an able, racy, and witty writer. Possessed of these and other qualifications that make the way easy to political eminence, he has devoted himself to the promotion of the Anti-slavery cause with rare courage and self-sacrifice. He has done no more than his duty in this respect, but he has done it under circumstances that would have daunted most men.

Look, too, at the last great effort of the idol of so many thousands, Mr. Senator Sumner; a discussion of a great national question, of which it has been said that we must go back to Webster's reply to Hayne, and Fisher Ames on the Jay Treaty, to find its equal in Congress; praise which we might perhaps qualify, if any adequate report were left us of some of those noble orations of Ames. No one can be blind to the skilful use he has made of his materials, the consummate ability with which he has marshalled them, and the radiant glow which his genius has thrown over all. Yet, with the exception of his reference to the anti-slavery debate in Congress in 1817, there is no train of thought or argument, and no single fact in the whole speech, which has not been familiar in our meetings and essays for the last ten years.

Before leaving the Halls of Congress, I have great pleasure in recognizing one exception to my remarks,—Mr. Giddings. Perhaps he is no real exception, since it would not be difficult to establish his claim to be considered one of the original abolition party. But whether he would choose to be so considered or not, it is certainly true that his long presence at the seat of government, his whole-souled devotedness, his sagacity and unwearied industry, have made him a large contributor to our anti-slavery resources.

On the relations of the American Church to Slavery.

The relations of the American Church to slavery, and the duties of private Christians,—the whole casuistry of this portion of the question, so momentous among descendants of the Puritans,—have been discussed with great acuteness and rare common sense by Messrs. Garrison, Goodell, Gerrit Smith, Pillsbury and Foster.* They have never attempted to judge the American Church by any standard except that which she has herself set up—never claimed that she should be perfect, but have contented themselves with demanding that she should be consistent. They have never judged her except out of her own mouth, and on facts asserted by her own presses and leaders. The sundering of the Methodist and Baptist denominations, and the universal agitation of the religious world, are the best proof of the sagacity with which their measures have been chosen, of the cogent arguments they have used, and the indisputable facts on which their criticisms have been founded.

Course of the Abolitionists in relation to the Church.

In nothing have the abolitionists shown more sagacity, or more thorough knowledge of their countrymen, than in the course they have pursued in relation to the Church. None but a New Englander can appreciate the power which church organizations wield over all that share the blood of the Puritans. The influence of each sect over its own members is overwhelming, often shutting out or controlling all other influences. The tyranny of our Methodism need not fear comparison with the darkest picture of Catholicism that Protestant pencils ever painted. That each local church is independent of all others in

* Mr. Gerrit Smith is a Free Soil member of Congress. He is rich, nobly munificent, and a true friend to the slave. Messrs. Pillsbury and Forster are devoted, laborious, and eloquent abolitionists.

theory and practice, we have been somewhat careful to assert; but the individual's independence of all organizations that place themselves between him and his God some few bold minds have asserted in theory, although most, even of these, have stopped there.

In such a land, the abolitionists early saw that, for a moral question like theirs, only two paths lay open: to work through the Church—that failing, to join battle with it. Some tried long, like Luther, to be Protestant, and yet not come out of Catholicism; but their eyes were at length opened. Since then, we have been convinced that to come out from the Church, to hold her up as the bulwark of slavery, and to make her shortcomings the main burden of our appeals to the religious sentiment of the community, was our first duty and best policy. This course alienated many friends, and was a subject of frequent rebuke from such men as Dr. Channing. But nothing has ever more strengthened the cause, or won it more influence; and it has had the healthiest effect on the Church itself. British Christians have always sanctioned it, whenever the case has been fairly presented to them. Mr. J. Q. Adams, a man far better acquainted with his own times than Dr. Channing, recognised the soundness of our policy. I do not know that he ever uttered a word in public on the delinquency of the Churches; but he is said to have assured his son, at the time the Methodist Church broke asunder, that other men might be more startled by the eclat of a political success, but nothing, in his opinion, promised more good or showed more clearly the real strength of the anti-slavery movement, than that momentous event.

Their course with respect to Emancipation in the British West Indies.

In 1838, the British Emancipation in the West Indies opened a rich field for observation, and a full harvest of important facts. The abolitionists, not willing to wait for the official reports of the government, sent special agents through those islands, whose reports they scattered, at great expense and by great exertion, broadcast through the land. This was at a time when no newspaper in the country would either lend or sell them the aid of its columns to enlighten the nation on an experiment so vitally important to us. And even now, hardly a press in the country cares or dares to bestow a line or communicate a fact toward the history of that remarkable revolution. The columns of the *Anti-slavery Standard*, *Pennsylvania Freeman*, and *Ohio Bugle* have been for years full of all that a thorough and patient advocacy of our cause demands. And the eloquent lips of many whom I see around me, and whom I need not name here, have done their share towards pressing all these topics on public attention.

I remember that when, in 1845, the present leaders of the Free-soil party, with Daniel Webster in their company, met to draw up the Anti-Texas Address of the Massachusetts Convention, they sent to abolitionists for anti-slavery facts and history, for the remarkable testimonies of our Revolutionary great men which they wished to quote. (Hear, hear.) When, many years ago, the legislature of Massachusetts wished to send to Congress a resolution affirming the duty of immediate emancipation, the Committee sent to William Lloyd Garrison to draw it up, and it stands now on our Statute Book as he drafted it.

Forebodings of the Abolitionists respecting Texas justified by the event.

How vigilantly, how patiently did we watch the Texas plot from its commencement! The politic South felt that their first move had been too bold, and thenceforward worked under-ground. For many a year men laughed at us for entertaining any apprehensions. It was impossible to rouse the North to its peril. David Lee Child was thought crazy, because he would not believe there was no danger. I remember being one of a committee which waited on Abbott Lawrence, a year or two only before annexation, to ask his countenance to some general movement, without distinction of party, against the Texas scheme. He smiled at our fears, begged us to have no apprehensions; stating that his correspondence with leading men at Washington enabled him to assure us that annexation was impossible, and that the South itself was determined to defeat the project. It was but a short while after that the Senators and Representatives from Texas took their seats in Congress!

Many of these services to the slave were done before I joined his cause. In thus referring to them, do not suppose me merely seeking occasion of eulogy on my predecessors and present co-laborers. I recal these things only to rebut the contemptuous criticism which some about us make the excuse for their past neglect of the movement, and in answer to Ion's representation of our course as one of reckless fanaticism, childish impatience, utter lack of good sense, and of our meetings as scenes only of excitement, of reckless and indiscriminate denunciation. I assert that every social, moral, economical, religious, political and historical aspect of the question has been ably and patiently examined. If the people are still in doubt, it is from the inherent difficulty of the subject, or a hatred of light, not from want of it. And all this has been done with an industry and ability which have left little for the professional skill, scholarly culture and historical learning of the new laborers to accomplish.

The Abolition discussion has been one of the noblest contributions to a Literature really American.

So far from the anti-slavery cause having lacked a manly and able discussion, I think it will be acknowledged hereafter that this discussion has been one of the noblest contributions to a literature really American. Heretofore, not only has our tone been but an echo of foreign culture, but the very topics we discussed, and the views we maintained have been too often pale reflections of European politics and European philosophy. No matter what dress we assumed, the voice was ever "the voice of Jacob." At last we have stirred a question thoroughly American. The subject has been looked at from a point of view entirely American; and it is of such deep interest that it has called out all the intellectual strength of the nation. For once, the nation speaks its own thoughts in its own language, and the tone also is all its own. It will hardly do for the defeated party to claim that, in this discussion, all the ability is on their side.

We are charged with lacking foresight, and are said to exaggerate. This charge of exaggeration brings to mind a fact I mentioned last

month at Horticultural Hall. The theatres in many of our large cities bring out, night after night, all the radical doctrines and all the startling scenes of *Uncle Tom*. They preach immediate emancipation, and slaves shoot their hunters to loud applause. Three years ago, sitting in this hall, I was myself somewhat startled by the assertion of my friend, Mr. Pillsbury, that the theatres would receive the gospel of anti-slavery truth earlier than the churches. A hiss went up from the galleries, and many of the audience were shocked by the remark. I asked myself whether I could endorse such a statement, and felt that I could not. I could not believe it to be true. Only three years have passed, and what was then deemed rant and fanaticism by seven out of ten who heard it, has proved true. The theatre, bowing to its audience, has preached immediate emancipation, and given us the whole of *Uncle Tom*; while, from the pulpits, and in the columns of the theological papers, that work is subjected to criticism, to reproach, and its author to severe rebuke. Do not, therefore, friends, set down as extravagant every statement which your experience does not warrant. It may be that you and I have not studied the signs of the times quite as accurately as the speaker. Going up and down the land, coming in closer contact with the feelings and prejudices of the community, he is sometimes a better judge than you are of its present state. An abolitionist has more motives for watching and more means of finding out the true state of public opinion than most of those critics who jeer at his assertions to-day, and are the first to cry "Just what *I* said," when his prophecy becomes fact to-morrow.

The Abolitionists appealed for help to the Churches at the outset of their efforts.

ION thinks also that we have thrown away valuable opportunities, and needlessly outraged the men and parties about us. Far from it. The anti-slavery movement was a patient and humble suppliant at every door whence any help could possibly be hoped. If we now repudiate and denounce some of our institutions, it is because we have faithfully tried them, and found them deaf to the claims of justice and humanity. Mr. Garrison, when he first meditated this crusade, did not

'At once, like a sunburst, his banner unfurl.'

O, no! he sounded his way warily forward. Brought up in the strictest reverence for church organizations, his first effort was to enlist the clergymen of Boston in the support of his views. On their aid he counted confidently in his effort to preach immediate repentance of all sin. He did not go, with *malice prepense*, as some seem to imagine, up to that 'attic' where Mayor Otis with difficulty found him.* He did not court hostility or seek exile. He did not sedulously endeavour to cut himself off from the sympathy and countenance of the community about him. O, no. A fervid disciple of the American Church, he con-

* Mr. H. G. Otis, in a letter published a few years since in one of the Boston papers, states that, at the commencement of the Anti-slavery agitation, and while he was Mayor of Boston, he was entreated by some alarmed slaveholder to ascertain by whom the turmoil was excited. "Some time afterwards," says he, "it was reported to me by the city officers, that they had ferreted out the paper and its editor; that his office was an obscure

ferred with some of the leading clergy of the city, and laid before them his views on the subject of slavery.* He painted their responsibility, and tried to induce them to take from his shoulders the burden of so mighty a movement. He laid himself at their feet. He recognised the colossal strength of the church; he knew that against their opposition it would be almost desperate to attempt to relieve the slave. He entreated them, therefore, to take up the cause. But the church turned away from him! They shut their doors upon him! They bade him compromise his convictions—smother one half of them, and support the Colonization movement, making his own auxiliary to that, or they would have none of him. Like Luther, he said:—"Here I stand; God help me; I can no other!" But the men who joined him were not persuaded that the case was so desperate. So they returned, each to his own local sect, and remained in them until some of us, myself among the number—later converts to the anti-slavery movement—thought they were slow and faltering in their obedience to conscience, and that they ought to have cut loose much sooner than they did. But patience, that old sympathies would not allow to be exhausted, associations, planted so deeply in youth, and spreading over so large a part of their manhood, were too strong for any mere argument to dislodge them. So they still persisted in remaining in the church. Their zeal was so fervent and their labours so abundant, that in some towns large societies were formed, led by most of the clergymen, and having almost all the church members on their lists. In those same towns now, you will not find one single abolitionist of any stamp whatever. They excuse their falling back by alleging that we have injured the cause by our extravagance and denunciation, and by the various other questions with which our names are associated. This might be a good reason

hole, his only visible auxiliary a negro boy, and his supporters a few very insignificant persons, of all colours." It is to this circumstance that Lowell refers in the following lines:—

- " In a small chamber, friendless and unseen,
Toiled o'er his types one poor unlearned young man;
The place was dark, unfurnished, and mean;—
Yet there the freedom of a race began.
- " Help came but slowly: surely no man yet
Put lever to the heavy world with less:
What need of help? He knew how types were set,
He had a dauntless spirit, and a press.
- " O small beginnings, ye are great and strong,
Based on a faithful heart, and weariless brain!
Ye build the future fair, ye conquer wrong,
Ye earn the crown and wear it not in vain."

* William Goodell, in his recent work entitled "Slavery and Anti-slavery," states that he "accompanied Mr. Garrison, in 1829, in calling upon a number of prominent ministers in Boston, to secure their co-operation in this cause. *Our expectations of important assistance from them were, at that time, very sanguine.*" In an address on Slavery and Colonization, delivered by Mr. Garrison in the Park-street Church, Boston, July 4, 1829, (which was subsequently published in the *National Philanthropist*,) he said, "I call on the ambassadors of Christ, everywhere, to make known this proclamation, 'Thus saith the Lord God of the Africans, Let this people go, that they may serve me.' I ask them to 'proclaim liberty to the captive, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound.' I call on the churches of the living God to LEAD in this great enterprise."

why they should not work with us, but does it excuse their not working at all? These people have been once awakened, thoroughly instructed in the momentous character of the movement, and have acknowledged the rightful claim of the slave on their sympathy and exertions. It is not possible that a few thousand persons, however extravagant, could prevent devoted men from finding some way to help such a cause, or at least manifesting their interest in it. But they have not only left us, they have utterly deserted the slave in the hour when the interest of their sects came across his cause. Is it uncharitable to conjecture the reason?

Mr. Garrison's appeal to Dr. Lyman Beecher, and its result.

At the early period, however, to which I have referred, the Church was much exercised by the persistency of the abolitionists in not going out from her. When I joined the anti-slavery ranks, sixteen years ago, the voice of the clergy was, "Will these pests *never* leave us? Will they still remain to trouble us? If you do not like us, there is the door!" When our friends had exhausted all entreaty, and tested the Christianity of that body, they shook off the dust of their feet, and came out of her. Afterwards, Mr. Garrison called on the head of the Orthodox denomination—a man, compared with whose influence on the mind of New England, that of the statesman whose death she has just mourned* was, in my opinion, but as dust in the balance—a man who then held the Orthodoxy of Boston in his right hand, and who has since taken up the West by its four corners, and given it so largely to Puritanism—I mean the Rev. Dr. Lyman Beecher.† Mr. Garrison was one of those who bowed to the spell of the matchless eloquence that then fulminated over our Zion. He waited on his favourite divine, and urged him to give to the new movement the incalculable aid of his name and countenance. He was patiently heard. He was allowed to unfold his plans and array his facts. The reply of the veteran was, "Mr. Garrison, I have too many irons in the fire to put in another." My friend said, "Doctor, you had better take all the irons you have in the fire out, and put this one in, if you mean well either to the religion or the civil liberty of our country." (Cheers.)

The great Orthodox leader did not rest with merely refusing to put another iron into his fire; he attempted to limit the irons of other men. As President of Lane Theological Seminary, he endeavoured to prevent the students from investigating the subject of slavery. The result, we all remember, was a strenuous resistance on the part of a large number of the students, led by that remarkable man, Theodore D. Weld. The

* Daniel Webster, for many years senator in Congress from the State of Massachusetts, and at the time of his decease Secretary of State in the government of President Fillmore. He was an orator of the highest order; but his career was disgraced by profligacy, venality, and unscrupulous ambition. He gave the aid of his great talents and influence to obtain the passage of the Fugitive Slave Bill, for the purpose of conciliating the votes of the slaveholders at the next nomination for the office of President. But so contemptuous was his rejection, that he did not get a single vote from those whom he had disgraced himself to serve, and the mortification of his defeat is generally believed to have hastened his death, which took place in the autumn of last year.

† Dr. Lyman Beecher, one of the ablest and most influential congregational ministers in the United States, and father of the authoress of "Uncle Tom's Cabin."

right triumphed, and Lane Seminary lost her character and her noblest pupils at the same time. It has languished ever since, even with such a President. Why should I follow Dr. Beecher into those Ecclesiastical Conventions, where the weight of his heavy hand has been felt against the slave? He has done no worse—indeed he has done much better—than most of his class. His opposition has always been open and manly.

But, Mr. Chairman, there is something in the blood which men tell us brings out virtues and defects, even when they have lain dormant for a generation. Good and evil qualities are hereditary, the physicians say. The blood whose warm currents of eloquent aid my friend solicited in vain in that generation, has sprung voluntarily to his assistance in the next,—both from the pulpit and the press,—to rouse the world by the vigour and pathos of its appeals.* (Enthusiastic cheers.) Even on that great triumph I would say a word. Marked and unequalled as has been that success, remember, in explanation of the phenomenon—for *Uncle Tom's Cabin* is rather an event than a book—remember this: if the old anti-slavery movement had not roused the sympathies of Mrs. Stowe, the book had never been written; if that movement had not raised up hundreds of thousands of hearts to sympathize with the slave, the book had never been read. (Cheers.) Not that the genius of the author has not made the triumph all her own; not that the unrivalled felicity of its execution has not trebled, quadrupled, increased ten-fold, if you please, the number of readers; but there must be a spot even for Archimedes to rest his lever upon, before he can move the world, (applause) and this effort of genius, consecrated to the noblest purpose, might have fallen dead and unnoticed in 1835. It is the anti-slavery movement which has changed 1835 to 1852. Those of us familiar with anti-slavery literature, know well that Richard Hildreth's *Archy Moore*, now *The White Slave*, is a book of eminent ability; that it owed its want of success to no lack of genius, but only to the fact, that it was a work born out of due time; that the anti-slavery cause had not then aroused sufficient numbers, on the wings of whose enthusiasm even the most delightful fiction could have risen into world-wide influence and repute. To the cause which had changed 1835 to 1852 is due something of the influence of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.

The abolitionists have never overlooked the wonderful power that the wand of the novelist was yet to wield in their behalf over the hearts of the world. Frederika Bremer only expressed the common sentiment of many of us, when she declared that "the fate of the negro was the romance of our history." Again and again, from my earliest knowledge of the cause, have I heard the opinion, that in the debateable land between freedom and slavery, in the thrilling incidents of the escape and sufferings of the fugitive, and the perils of his friends, the future Walter Scott of America would find the "border-land" of his romance, and the most touching incidents of his "Sixty Years since;" and that the literature of America would gather its freshest laurels from that field.

* Alluding to Dr. Beecher's son and daughter, the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher and Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe.

Summary of the efforts of the Abolitionists, and Dr. Channing's testimony to the value of their labours.

So much, Mr. Chairman, for our treatment of the church. We clung to it as long as we hoped to make it useful. Disappointed in that, we have tried to expose its paltering and hypocrisy on this question, broadly and with unflinching boldness, in hopes to purify and bring it to our aid. Our labours with the great religious societies, with the press, with the institutions of learning, have been as untiring, and almost as unsuccessful. We have tried to do our duty to every public question that has arisen, which could be made serviceable in rousing general attention. The Right of Petition, the Power of Congress, the Internal Slave Trade, Texas, the Compromise measures, the Fugitive Slave Law, the motions of leading men, the tactics of parties, have all been watched and used with sagacity and effect as means to produce a change in public opinion. Dr. Channing has thanked the abolition party, in the name of all the lovers of free thought and free speech, for having vindicated that right, when all others seemed ready to surrender it; vindicated it at the cost of reputation, ease, property, even life itself. The only blood that has been shed on this side the ocean, in defence of the freedom of the press, was the blood of Lovejoy, one of their number. In December, 1836, Dr. Channing spoke of their position in these terms:—

“Whilst, in obedience to conscience, they have refrained from opposing force to force, they have still persevered, amidst menace and insult, in bearing testimony against wrong, in giving utterance to their deep convictions. Of such men I do not hesitate to say, that they have rendered to freedom a more essential service than any other body of men among us. The defenders of freedom are not those who claim and exercise rights which no one assails, or who win shouts of applause by well-turned compliments to liberty in the days of her triumph. They are those who stand up for rights which mobs, conspiracies, or single tyrants put in jeopardy; who contend for liberty in that particular form which is threatened at the moment by the many or the few. To the abolitionists this honour belongs. The first systematic effort to strip the citizen of freedom of speech, they have met with invincible resolution. From my heart I thank them. I am myself their debtor. I am not sure that I should at this moment write in safety, had they shrunk from the conflict, had they shut their lips, imposed silence on their presses, and hid themselves before their ferocious assailants. I know not where these outrages would have stopped, had they not met resistance from their first destined victims. The newspaper press, with a few exceptions, uttered no genuine indignant rebuke of the wrong-doers, but rather countenanced by its gentle censures the reign of Force. The mass of the people looked supinely on this new tyranny, under which a portion of their fellow-citizens seemed to be sinking. A tone of denunciation was beginning to proscribe all discussion of slavery; and had the spirit of violence, which selected associations as its first objects, succeeded in this preparatory enterprise, it might have been easily turned against any and every individual who might presume to agitate the unwelcome subject. It is hard to say to what outrage the fettered press of the country might not have been reconciled. I thank the abolitionists that, in this evil day, they were true to the rights which the multitude were ready to betray. Their purpose to suffer, to die, rather than surrender their dearest liberties, taught the lawless that they had a foe to contend with, whom it was not safe to press, whilst, like all manly appeals, it called forth reflection and sympathy in the better portion of the community. In the name of freedom and humanity, I thank them.”

No one, Mr. Chairman, deserves more of that honour than he whose chair you now occupy. Our youthful city can boast of but few places of historic renown. But I know none which coming time is more likely to keep in memory, than the roof which Francis Jackson offered to the anti-slavery women of Boston, when Mayor Lyman confessed he was unable to protect their meeting, and when the only protection the laws could afford Mr. Garrison was the shelter of the common jail.

The political antagonists of Slavery, from the necessity of their position, are driven to compromise with the system they oppose.

Sir, when a nation sets itself to do evil, and all its leading forces, wealth, party, and piety, join in the career, it is impossible but that those who offer a constant opposition should be hated and maligned, no matter how wise, cautious, and well-planned their course may be. We are peculiar sufferers in this way. The community has come to hate its reproving Nathan so bitterly, that even those to whom the relenting part of it is beginning to look as standard-bearers of the anti-slavery host, think it unwise to avow any connection or sympathy with him. I refer to some of the leaders of the political movement against slavery. They feel it to be their mission to marshal and use as effectively as possible the present convictions of the people. They cannot afford to encumber themselves with the odium which twenty years of angry agitation have engendered in great sects sore from unsparing rebuke, parties galled by constant defeat, and leading men provoked by unexpected exposure. They are willing to confess, privately, that our movement produced theirs, and that its continued existence is the very breath of their life. But, at the same time, they would fain walk on the road without being soiled by too close contact with the rough pioneers who threw it up. They are wise and honourable, and their silence is very expressive.

When I speak of their eminent position and acknowledged ability, another thought strikes me. Who converted these men and their distinguished associates? It is said we have shown neither candour in plans, nor sagacity in discussion, nor ability in argument. Who then or what converted Burlingame and Wilson, Sumner and Adams, Palfrey and Mann, Chase, Hale, Phillips, and Giddings? Who taught the *Christian Register*, the *Daily Advertiser*, and that class of prints, that there were such things as a slave and a slaveholder in the land, and so gave them some more intelligent basis than their mere instincts to hate WILLIAM LLOYD GARRISON? (Shouts and laughter.) What magic wand was it whose touch made the toadying servility of the land start up the real demon that it was, and at the same time gathered into the slave's service the professional ability, ripe culture, and personal integrity that grace the Free Soil ranks? We never argue! These men, then, were converted by simple denunciation! They were all converted by the "hot," "reckless," "ranting," "bigoted," "fanatic" Garrison, who never troubled himself about facts, nor stopped to argue with an opponent, but straightway knocked him down! (Roars of laughter and cheers.) My old and valued friend Mr. Sumner often boasts that he was a reader of *The Liberator* before I was. Do not criticise too much the agency by which such men were converted.

That blade has a double edge. Our reckless course—our empty rant—our fanaticism, have made abolitionists of some of the best and ablest men in the land. We are inclined to go on and see if even with such poor tools we cannot reach some more. (Enthusiastic applause.) Anti-slavery zeal and the roused conscience of the “godless come-outers” made the trembling South demand the Fugitive Slave Law; and the Fugitive Slave Law “provoked” Mrs. Stowe to the good work of *Uncle Tom*. That is something! (Cheers.) Let me say, in passing, that of none of these men, or their efforts, will you find an earlier or more generous appreciation or more flowing eulogy than in the columns of *The Liberator*. No one, however feeble, has ever peeped or muttered, in any quarter, that the vigilant eye of the pioneer has not recognized him. He has stretched out the right hand of a most cordial welcome the moment any man’s face was turned Zionward. (Loud cheers.)

I do not mention these things to praise Mr. Garrison; I do not stand here for that purpose. You will not deny—if you do, I can prove it—that the movement of the abolitionists converted these men. Their constituents were converted by it. The assault upon the right of petition, upon the right to print and speak of slavery, the denial of the right of Congress over the District, the annexation of Texas, the Fugitive Slave Law, were measures which the anti-slavery movement provoked. The anti-slavery cause, then, converted these men; it gave them a constituency; it gave them an opportunity to speak, and it gave them a public to listen. The anti-slavery cause gave them their votes, gave them their offices, furnished them with their facts, gave them their audience. If you tell me they cherished all those principles in their own breasts before Mr. Garrison appeared, I can only say, if the anti-slavery movement did not give them their ideas, it surely gave them new courage to utter them.

In such circumstances, is it not singular that the name of William Lloyd Garrison has never been pronounced, for fourteen years, on the floor of the United States Congress, linked with any epithet but that of contempt! No one of those men who owe their ideas, their station, their audience to him, have ever thought it worth their while to utter one word in grateful recognition of the power that called them into being. When obliged by the course of their argument, to treat the question historically, they can go across the water to Clarkson and Wilberforce—yes, to a safe salt-water distance. (Laughter.) As Daniel Webster, when he was talking to the farmers of Western New York, and wished to contrast slave labour and free labour, did not dare to compare New York with Virginia—sister states under the same government, planted by the same race, worshipping at the same altar, speaking the same language,—identical in all respects save that one in which he wished to seek the contrast; but, no; he compared it with *Brazil*—(cheers and laughter)—the contrast was so close! (Renewed cheers). Catholic—Protestant; Spanish—Saxon; despotism—municipal institutions; readers of Lope de Vega and of Shakspeare; mutterers of the mass—children of the Bible! But Virginia is too near home! So is Garrison! One would have thought there was something in the human breast that would sometimes break through policy. These noble-hearted men whom I have named must surely have found quite irksome the

constant practice of what Dr. Gardner used to call "that despicable virtue, *prudence!*"—(laughter)—one would have thought, when they heard that name spoken with contempt, their ready eloquence would have leaped from its scabbard to avenge even a word that threatened him with insult. But it never came—never! (Sensation.) I do not say I blame them. Perhaps they thought they should serve the cause better by drawing a broad black line between themselves and him. Perhaps they thought the devil could be cheated;—I do not think he can. (Laughter and cheers.)

We are perfectly willing—I am for one—to be the dead lumber that shall make a path for these men into the light and love of the people. We hope for nothing better. Use us freely, in any way, for the slave. When the temple is finished, the tools will not complain that they are thrown aside, let who will lead up the nation to put on the topstone with shoutings. But while so much remains to be done, while our little camp is beleaguered all about, do nothing to weaken his influence whose sagacity, more than any other single man's, has led us up hither, and whose name is identified with that movement which the North still heeds, and the South still fears the most. After all, Mr. Chairman, this is no hard task. We know very well, that, notwithstanding this loud clamour about our harsh judgments of men and things, our opinions differ very little from those of our Free Soil friends, or of intelligent men generally, when you really get at them. When men lay aside the judicial ermine, the senator's robe, or the party collar, and sit down in private life, you can hardly distinguish their tones from ours. Their eyes seem as anointed as our own. As in Pope's day—

—— "At all we laugh they laugh, no doubt;
The only difference is, we dare *laugh out.*"

Caution is not always good policy in a cause like ours. It is said that when Napoleon saw the day going against him, he used to throw away all the rules of war, and trust himself to the hot impetuosity of his soldiers. The masses are governed more by impulse than conviction; and even were it not so, the convictions of most men are on our side, and this will surely appear if we can only pierce the crust of their prejudice or indifference. I observe that our Free Soil friends never stir their audience so deeply as when some individual leaps beyond the platform, and strikes upon the very heart of the people. Men listen to discussions of laws and tactics with ominous patience. It is when Mr. Sumner, in Faneuil Hall, avows his determination to disobey the Fugitive Slave Law, and cries out, "I was a man before I was a commissioner"—when Mr. Giddings says of slave insurrections, "If that is the only path to freedom, let them come"—that their associates on the platform are sure they are wrecking the party—while many a heart beneath beats its first pulse of anti-slavery life.

These are brave words. When I compare them with the general tone of Free Soil men in Congress, I distrust the atmosphere of Washington and of politics. These men move about Sauls and Goliaths among us, taller by many a cubit. There they lose port and stature. Mr. Sumner's speech in the Senate unsays no part of his Faneuil Hall pledge. But, discussing the same topic, no one would gather from any word or argument that the speaker ever took such ground as he did in Faneuil Hall. It is, all through, the *law*, the *manner* of the surrender,

not the surrender itself of the slave, that he objects to. As my friend Mr. Pillsbury so forcibly says, so far as anything in the speech shows, he puts the slave behind the jury trial, behind the *habeas corpus* act, and behind the new interpretation of the constitution, and says to the slave claimant—"You must get through all these before you reach him; but if you *can* get through all these, you may have him!" It was no tone like this which made the old Hall rock. Not if he got through twelve jury trials, and forty *habeas corpus* acts, and constitutions built high as yonder monument, would he permit as much as the shadow of the little finger of the slave claimant to touch the slave! (Applause.) At least, so he was understood. In an elaborate discussion by [Mr. Hale] the leader of the political anti-slavery party, of the whole topic of Fugitive Slaves, you do not find one protest against the surrender itself, one frank expression on the constitutional clause, or any indication of the speaker's final purpose, should any one be properly claimed under that provision. It was under no such uncertain trumpet that the anti-slavery host was originally marshalled. The tone is that of the German soldiers whom Napoleon routed. They didn't care, they said, for the defeat, but only that they were not beaten according to rule. (Laughter and cheers.) Mr. Mann said in one of his speeches, that "he felt for the fugitive slave as for his own blood-brother; that he ought to do as much for him as for his blood-brother; and *BUT for the constitution* of the United States, he would risk everything rather than let him be surrendered." What a "BUT"—from the lips, too, of a champion of the Higher Law! Spite of all constitutions, neither my mother's son nor any other mother's son shall, with my consent, go back to bondage. (Enthusiastic cheers.) So speaks the *heart*—Mr. Mann's version is that of the politician.

Mr. Mann's recent speech in August, '52, has the same non-committal tone to which I have alluded, as Mr. Sumner's. While professing, in the course of that speech, in the most eloquent terms, his loyalty to the Higher Law, Mr. Sutherland asked, "Is there, in Mr. Mann's opinion, any conflict between that Higher Law and the Constitution? If so, what is it? If not so, why introduce an irrelevant topic into the debate?" *Mr. Mann avoided any reply, and asked not to be interrupted.* Is that the frankness which becomes an abolitionist? Can such concealment help any cause? The design of Mr. Sutherland is evident. If Mr. Mann had allowed there was no conflict between the Higher Law and the Constitution, all his remarks were futile and out of order. But if he asserted that any such conflict existed, how did he justify himself in swearing to support that instrument?—a question our Free Soil friends are slow to meet. Mr. Mann saw the dilemma, and avoided it by silence!

The same speech contains the usual deprecatory assertions that Free Soilers have no wish to interfere with Slavery in the States; that they "consent to let slavery remain where it is." If he means that he, Horace Mann, a moral and accountable being, "consents to let slavery remain where it is," all the rest of his speech is sound and fury signifying nothing. If he means that he, Horace Mann, *as a politician and party man*, consents to that, but, elsewhere and otherwise, will do his best to abolish this "all-comprehending wickedness of slavery, in

which every wrong and every crime has its natural home"—then he should have plainly said so. Otherwise, his disclaimer is but an unworthy trick, which could have deceived none. He must have known that all the South care for is the *action*, not in what *capacity* the deed is done.

Mr. Giddings is more careful in his statement; but, judged by his speech on the "platforms," how little does he seem to understand either his own duty or the true philosophy of the cause he serves! He says—

"We, Sir, would drive the slave question from discussion in this Hall. It never had a constitutional existence here. Separate this Government from from all interference with slavery; let the Federal Power wash its hands from that institution; let us purify ourselves from its contagion; leave it with the States, who alone have the power to sustain it—then, Sir, will agitation cease in regard to it here; then we shall have nothing more to do with it, our time will be no more occupied with it; and, like a band of freemen, a band of brothers, we could meet here, and legislate for the prosperity, the improvement of mankind, for the elevation of our race."

Mr. Sumner speaks in the same strain. He says:—

"The time will come when Courts or Congress will declare that nowhere under the Constitution can man hold property in man. For the republic, such a decree will be the way of peace and safety. As slavery is banished from the national jurisdiction, it will cease to vex our national politics. It may linger in the States as a local institution, but it will no longer endanger national animosities when it no longer demands national support." * * * "For himself, he knows *no better aim* under the Constitution than to bring the government back to the precise position which it occupied" when it was launched.

Slavery cannot be abolished by compromise.

This seems to me a very mistaken strain. Whenever slavery is banished from our national jurisdiction, it will be a momentous gain, a vast stride. But let us not mistake the half-way house for the end of the journey. I will not say that it matters not to Abolitionists under what special law slavery exists. Their battle lasts while it exists anywhere, and I doubt not Mr. Sumner and Mr. Giddings feel themselves enlisted for the whole war. I will even suppose, what neither of these gentlemen states, that their plan includes not only that slavery shall be abolished in the District [of Columbia] and in the [United States] Territories, but that the slave basis of representation shall be struck from the Constitution, and the slave-surrender clause construed away. But even then, does Mr. Giddings or Mr. Sumner really believe that slavery, existing in its full force in the States, "will cease to vex our national politics?" Can they point to any state where a powerful oligarchy, possessed of immense wealth, has ever existed without attempting to meddle in the government? Even now, do not manufacturing, banking, and commercial capital perpetually vex our politics? Why should not slave capital exert the same influence? Do they imagine that a hundred thousand men, possessed of *two thousand millions of dollars*, which they feel the spirit of the age is seeking to tear from their grasp, will not eagerly catch at all the support they can obtain by getting the control of the government? In a land where the dollar is almighty, "where the sin of not being rich is only atoned for by the effort to become so," do they doubt that such an oligarchy will generally

succeed? Besides, banking and manufacturing capital are not urged by despair to seek a controlling influence in politics. They know they are about equally safe whichever party rules—that no party wishes to legislate their rights away. Slave property knows that its being allowed to exist depends on its having the virtual control of the government. Its constant presence in politics is dictated, therefore, by despair as well as by the wish to secure fresh privileges. Money, however, is not the only strength of the slave power. That, indeed, were enough in an age when capitalists are our feudal barons. But though driven entirely from national shelter, the slaveholders would have the strength of old associations, and of peculiar laws in their own States, which give those States wholly into their hands. A weaker prestige, fewer privileges, and less comparative wealth have enabled the British aristocracy to rule England for two hundred years, though the root of their strength was cut at Naseby. It takes ages for deeply rooted institutions to die. And driving slavery into the States will hardly be our Naseby. Whoever, therefore, lays the flattering unction to his soul, that while slavery exists any where in the States, our legislators will sit down “like a band of brothers,”—unless they are all slaveholding brothers—is doomed to find himself woefully mistaken. Mr. Adams, ten years ago, refused to sanction this doctrine of his friend, Mr. Giddings; combatting it ably and eloquently in his well-known reply to Ingersoll.

But is Mr. Giddings willing to sit down with slaveholders, “like a band of brothers,” knowing all the time that they are tyrants at home, and not seek to use the common strength to protect their victims? Does he not know that *it is impossible for Free States and Slave States to unite under any form of constitution, no matter how clean the parchment may be, without the compact resulting in new strength to the slave system?* It is the unimpaired strength of Massachusetts and New York, and the youthful vigour of Ohio, that even now enable bankrupt Carolina to hold up the institution. Every nation must maintain peace within her limits. No government can exist which does not fulfil that function. When we say the Union will maintain peace in Carolina, that being a slave state, what does “peace” mean? It means keeping the slave beneath the heel of his master. Now, even on the principle of two wrongs making a right, if we put this great weight of a common government into the scale of the slaveholder, we are bound to add something equal to the slave’s side. But no; Mr. Giddings is content to give the slaveholder the irresistible and organic half of a common government, and bind himself to utter no word, and move not a finger in his civil capacity, to help the slave. An abolitionist would find himself not much at home, I fancy, in that “band of brothers!”

And Mr. Sumner says he “knows no better aim, under the Constitution, than to bring back the Government” to where it was in 1789! Has the voyage been so very honest and prosperous a one, in his opinion, that his only wish is to start again with the same ship, the same crew, and the same sailing orders? Grant all he claims, as to the state of public opinion, the intentions of leading men, and the form of our institutions at that period; with all these checks on wicked men, and helps to good ones, here we are! according to his own showing, ruled

by slavery, tainted to the core with slavery, and binding the infamous Fugitive Slave Law like an honorable frontlet on our brows. The more accurate and truthful his glowing picture of the public virtue of 1789, the stronger my argument. If even all those great patriots, and all that enthusiasm for justice and liberty, did not avail to keep us safe, what will? In such desperate circumstances, can his statesmanship devise no better aim than to try the same experiment over again, under precisely the same conditions? What new guarantees does he propose to prevent the voyage from being turned again into a piratical slave-trading cruise? None! Have sixty years taught us nothing? In 1660 the English thought, in recalling Charles II., that the memory of that scaffold which had once darkened the windows of Whitehall, would be guarantee enough for his good behaviour. But, spite of the spectre, Charles II. repeated Charles I., and James outdid him. Wiser by this experience, when the nation, in 1689, got another chance, they trusted to no guarantees, but so arranged the very elements of their government, that William III. *could not* repeat Charles I. Let us profit by the lesson. These mistakes of leading men merit constant attention. The anti-slavery awakening has cost too many years and too much labour to risk letting its energy be turned into a wrong channel, or balked by fruitless experiments. Neither the slave nor the country must be cheated a second time.

Political life in the United States fatal to a consistent opposition to Slavery.

Mr. Chairman, when I remember the grand port of these men elsewhere, and witness this confusion of ideas, and vailing of their proud crests to party necessities, they seem to me to lose in Washington something of their old giant proportions. How often have we witnessed this change! It seems the inevitable result of political life under any government, but especially under ours: and we are surprised at it in these men, only because we fondly hoped they would be exceptions to the general rule. It was Chamfort, I think, who first likened a Republican Senate House to Milton's Pandemonium—another proof of the rare insight French writers have shown in criticising republican institutions. The Capitol at Washington always brings to my mind that other capitol, which in Milton's great Epic "rose like an exhalation" "from the burning marl"—that towered palace, "with starry lamps and blazing cressets" hung—fixed in stately height, with "roof of fretted gold," its hall "like a covered field." You remember, sir, the host of archangels gathered around it, and how thick the airy crowd

"Swarmed and were straitened; till, the signal given,
Behold a wonder! They but now who seemed
In bigness to surpass earth's giant sons,
Now less than smallest dwarfs, in narrow room
Throng numberless, like that pygmean race
Beyond the Indian mount; or fairy elves,
Whose midnight revels, by a forest side
Or fountain, some belated peasant sees.
Thus incorporeal spirits to smallest forms
Reduced their shapes immense, and were at large,
Though without number still, amid the hall
Of that infernal court."

Mr. Chairman, they got no farther than the hall! (Cheers.) They were not a *healthy* party! The healthy party, the men who made no compromise in order to come under that arch,—Milton describes further on, where he says—

—————“ But far within
And in their own dimensions, like themselves,
The great seraphic lords and cherubim,
In close recess, and secret conclave sat;
A thousand demi-gods on golden seats
Frequent and full.”

These were the healthy party! (Loud applause.) These are the Casses and the Houstons, the Footes and the Soulés, the Clays, the Websters, and the Douglasses, that bow no lofty forehead in the dust, but can find ample room and verge enough under the Constitution. Our friends go down there, and must be dwarfed into pigmies before they can find space within the lists! (Cheers.)

It would be superfluous to say that we grant the entire sincerity and true-heartedness of these men. But in critical times, when a wrong step entails most disastrous consequences, to “mean well” is not enough. Sincerity is no shield for any man from the criticism of his fellow-labourers. I do not fear that such men as these will take offence at our discussion of their views and conduct. Long years of hard labour, in which we have borne at least our share, have resulted in a golden opportunity. How to use it, friends differ. Shall we stand courteously silent, and let these men play out the play, when, to our thinking, their plan will slacken the zeal, balk the hopes, and waste the efforts of the slave’s friends? No! I put that confidence in Charles Sumner’s love for the slave, that I know he will welcome my criticism whenever I deem his counsel wrong; that he will hail every effort to serve our common client more efficiently. (Great cheering.) It is not his honour nor mine that is at issue; nor his feeling or mine that is to be consulted. The only question for either of us is, What in these golden moments can be done—where can the hardest blow be struck? (Loud applause.) I hope I am just to Mr. Sumner; I have known him long, and honour him. I know his genius—I know his virtues; yet if from his high place he sends out counsels which I think dangerous to the cause, I am bound to raise my voice against them. I do my duty in a private communication to him first, then in public to his friends and mine. The friendship that will not bear this criticism is but the frost-work of a winter’s morning, which the sun shines on, and it is gone. His friendship will survive all that I say of him, and mine shall survive all that he shall say of me; and this is the only way in which the anti-slavery cause can be served. Truth, success, victory, triumph over the obstacles that beset us—this is all either of us wants. (Cheers.)

Present condition of the question compared with the apathy that prevailed before the commencement of Mr. Garrison’s labours.

If all I have said to you is untrue, if I have exaggerated, explain to me this fact. In 1831, Mr. Garrison commenced a paper advocating the doctrine of immediate emancipation. He had against him the thirty thousand churches and all the clergy of the country—its wealth, its

commerce, its press. In 1831, what was the state of things? There was the most entire apathy on the slave question.* If men knew of the existence of slavery, it was only as a part of picturesque Virginia life. No whisper of it stirred the surface of the political sea. The Church heard of it occasionally, when some agent of the Colonization Society asked funds to send the blacks to Africa. Old school books tainted with some anti-slavery selections had passed out of use, and new ones were compiled to suit the times. As soon as any dissent from the prevailing faith appeared, every one set himself to crush it. The pulpits preached at it: the press denounced it: mobs tore down houses, threw presses into the fire and the stream, and shot an editor: religious conventions tried to smother it: the great political parties arrayed themselves against it. Daniel Webster boasted in the Senate, that he had never introduced the subject of slavery to that body, and never would. Mr. Clay, in 1839, makes a speech for the Presidency, in which he says that to discuss the subject of slavery is moral treason, and that no man has a right to introduce the subject into Congress. Mr. Benton, in 1844, laid down his platform, and he not only denies the right, but asserts that he never has discussed and never will discuss that subject. Yet Mr. Clay, from '39 down to his death, hardly made a remarkable speech of any kind, except on slavery. Mr. Webster, having indulged now and then in a little easy rhetoric, as at Niblo's and elsewhere, generously contributing his aid to both sides, opens his mouth in 1850, and stops talking about it only when death closes his lips. Mr. Benton's six or eight speeches in the United States Senate have all been on the subject of slavery in the Southwestern section of the country, and form the basis of whatever claim he has to the character of a statesman, and he owes his seat in the next Congress to anti-slavery pretensions! The Whig and Democratic parties pledged themselves just as emphatically against the anti-slavery discussion—against agitation and free-speech. These men said, "It shan't be talked about, it won't be talked about!" These are *your statesmen!*—men who understand the present, that is, and mould the future. The man who understands his own time, and whose genius moulds the future to his views, he is a statesman, is he not? These men devoted themselves to banks, to tariff, to internal improvements, to constitutional and financial questions. They said to slavery, "Back! no entrance here! We pledge ourselves against it." And then there came up a humble printer boy, who whipped them into the traces, and made them talk, like Hotspur's starling, nothing BUT slavery. He scattered all these gigantic shadows—tariff, bank, constitutional questions, financial questions; and Slavery, like the colossal head in Walpole's romance, came up and filled the whole political horizon! (Enthusiastic applause.) Yet you must remember he is not a statesman; he is a "fanatic." He has no discipline—Ion says so; he does not understand the "discipline that is essential to victory!" This man did not understand his own time—he did not know what the future was to be—he was not

* Societies for the amelioration and gradual abolition of Slavery existed before Mr. Garrison began his career. But being destitute of the cardinal principle of the sinfulness of the system, and the duty of immediately abolishing it, they produced no effect upon the public mind; and were so little feared, that slaveholders occasionally enrolled themselves in their ranks.

able to shape it—he had no “prudence”—he had no “foresight!” Daniel Webster said, “I have never introduced this subject, and never will”—and died broken-hearted because he had not been able to talk enough about it. Benton said, “I will never speak of slavery”—and lives to break with his party on this issue! Mr. Clay said it is “moral treason” to introduce the subject into Congress—and lived to see Congress turned into an Anti-Slavery Debating Society, to suit the purpose of one “too powerful individual!”

These were statesmen, mark you! Two of them have gone to their graves covered with eulogy; and our national stock of eloquence is insufficient to describe how profound and far-reaching was the sagacity of Daniel Webster! Remember who it was that said in 1831, “I am in earnest—I will not equivocate—I will not excuse—I will not retreat a single inch—and *I will be heard!*” (Repeated cheers.) That speaker has lived twenty-two years, and the complaint of twenty-three millions of people is, “shall we ever hear of anything but slavery?” (Cheers.) I heard Dr. Kirk, of Boston, say in his own pulpit, when he returned from London—where he had been as representative to the “Evangelical Alliance”—“I went up to London, and they asked me what I thought of the question of immediate emancipation? They examined us all. Is an American never to travel any where in the world, but men will throw this troublesome question in his face?” Well, it is all *his* fault [pointing to Mr. Garrison.] (Enthusiastic cheers.)

Now, when we come to talk of statesmanship, of sagacity in choosing time and measures, of endeavour by proper means to right the public mind, of keen insight into the present and potent sway over the future, it seems to me that the abolitionists, who have taken—whether for good or for ill, whether to their discredit or to their praise—this country by the four corners, and shaken it until you can hear nothing but slavery, whether you travel in railroad or steamboat, whether you enter the hall of legislation or read the columns of a newspaper—it seems to me that such men may point to the present aspect of the nation, to their originally avowed purpose, to the pledges and efforts of all your great men against them, and allow you to settle to which side the credit of sagacity and statesmanship belongs. Napoleon employed himself at St. Helena in showing how Wellington ought not to have conquered at Waterloo. The world has never got time to listen to the explanation. Sufficient for them that the allies entered Paris. In like manner, it seems hardly the province of a defeated Church and State to deny the skill of measures by which they have been conquered!

It may seem strange to some, this claim for Mr. Garrison of a profound statesmanship. Men have heard him styled a mere fanatic so long, that they are incompetent to judge him fairly. “The phrases men are accustomed,” says Goethe, “to repeat incessantly, end by becoming convictions, and ossify the organs of intelligence.” I cannot accept you, therefore as my jury. I appeal from Felix to Cæsar; from the prejudice of our streets to the common sense of the world, and to your children.

Every thoughtful and unprejudiced mind must see that such an evil as slavery will yield only to the most radical treatment. If you consider the work we have to do, you will not think us needlessly aggressive,

or that we dig down unnecessarily deep in laying the foundations of our enterprise. A money power of two thousand millions of dollars, as the prices of slaves now range, held by a small body of able and desperate men; that body raised into a political aristocracy by special constitutional provisions; cotton, the product of the slave labour, forming the basis of our whole foreign commerce, and the commercial class thus subsidized; the press bought up, the pulpit reduced to vassalage, the heart of the common people chilled by a bitter prejudice against the black race; our leading men bribed by ambition, either to silence or open hostility—in such a land, on what shall an abolitionist rely? On a few cold prayers, mere lip-service, and never from the heart? On a Church resolution, hidden often in its record, and meant only as a decent cover for servility in daily practice? On political parties, with their superficial influence at best, and seeking, ordinarily, only to use existing prejudices to the best advantage? Slavery has deeper root here than any aristocratic institution has in Europe; and politics is but the common pulse-beat of which revolution is the fever spasm. Yet we have seen European aristocracy survive storms which seemed to reach down to the primal strata of European life. How shall the stream rise above its fountain? Where shall our church organizations or parties get strength to attack their great parent and moulder, the slave power? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, why hast thou made me thus? The old jest of one who tried to lift himself in his own basket is but a tame picture of the man who imagines that, by working wholly through existing sects and parties, he can destroy slavery. Mechanics say that nothing but an earthquake strong enough to move all Egypt can bring down the pyramids.

Experience has confirmed these views. The abolitionists who have acted on them have a “short method” with all unbelievers. They have but to point to their own success, in contrast with every other man’s failure. To awaken the nation to its real state, and chain it to the consideration of this one duty, is half the work. So much we have done. Slavery has been made the question of this generation. To startle the South to madness, so that every step she takes in her blindness, is one step more toward ruin, is much. This we have done. Witness Texas and the Fugitive Slave Law. To have elaborated for the nation the only plan of redemption, pointed out the only Exodus from this “sea of troubles,” is much. This we claim to have done in our motto of IMMEDIATE, UNCONDITIONAL EMANCIPATION ON THE SOIL. The closer any statesmanlike mind looks into the question, the more favour our plan finds with it. The Christian asks fairly of the infidel, “If religion be not from God, how do you explain its triumph, and the history of the first three centuries?” Our question is similar: If our agitation has not been wisely planned and conducted, explain for us the history of the last twenty years? Experience is a safe light to walk by, and he is not a rash man who expects success in future from the same means which have secured it in times past.

THE END.

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